IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows.

1. (Previously Amended) A method of archiving and retrieving digital media items, comprising

receiving a user input identifying a group of users to which an archiving user belongs;

receiving archiving input data identifying: a digital media item to be archived for the group, the user's selection of zero or more group event types from a predetermined plurality of group event types specific to the group, the user's selection of zero or more persons in the group, and the user's selection of a time period;

generating index information using the received user archiving input;

storing the index information in association with the identified digital media item;

repeating the reception of archiving input data, the generation of the index information and the storing of the index information for a plurality of digital media items;

receiving retrieval input data representing a selection of a default or zero or more group event types from the predetermined plurality of group event types for the group, a selection of a default or zero or more persons in the group, and a selection of a time period; and

using the selections and the identified group to retrieve and output digital media items that match the selection.

2. (Previously Amended) A method according to Claim 1 wherein the retrieval input data comprises a user input from another user identifying a group to which the other user belongs and the digital media items are retrieved using the group identified for the other user in the user retrieval input.

3. (Original) A method according to claim 1 including defining the distinct groups of people, and defining group event types that are appropriate for members of the groups to distinguish episodic events memorable to the group.

4. (Original) A method according to claim 1 including receiving said digital media item to be archived, and storing said digital media item in association with the index information.

5. (Previously Amended) A method according to claim 1 including receiving archiving input data identifying a digital media item as being associated with a memorable high point in the mind of the user.

6. (Previously Amended) A method according to claim 5 wherein the retrieval input data includes an input selecting memorable high points.

7. (Previously Amended) A method according to claim 1 wherein the index information includes an identification of a media type of the digital media item.

8. (Previously Amended) A method according to claim 7 wherein the retrieval input data includes an input identifying a media type, and the digital media items are retrieved and output based on the identified media type.

9. (Previously Amended) A method according to claim 1 including receiving archiving input data identifying a plurality of digital media items and an input identifying the digital media items to be associated as perceived by the user, wherein the index information is generated to include the identified association.

10. (Previously Amended) A method according to claim 9 wherein, when digital media items are retrieved and output as a result of the user retrieval input, any digital media items having the identified association in the index information are automatically identified for retrieval and output.

11. (Original) A method according to claim 10 wherein the automatically identified digital media items are automatically retrieved and output.

12. (Original) A method according to claim 10 including outputting a notification to a user that associated digital media items are available, and retrieving and outputting automatically identified digital media items in response to a user input.

13. (Previously Amended) A method according to claim 1 further comprising:

receiving a user request for automatic nostalgic retrieval,

automatically generating an initial set of said selections,

using the selections to retrieve and output digital media items,

automatically modifying one or more of the selections,

using the modified selections to retrieve and output digital media items and

repeating the modifying, and retrieval and output steps.

14. (Previously Amended) A user terminal for use in the archiving and retrieval of digital media items associated with predefined distinct groups of one or more people, the terminal comprising:

user interface means for generating archiving input data identifying:

a group to which the user belongs,

a digital media item to be archived for the group,

a user selection of zero or more group event types from a predetermined plurality of group event types specific to the group,

a user selection of zero or more persons in the group, and

a user selection of a time period;

transmission means for transmitting the archiving input to a processing device for generating index information using the archiving input and for storing the index information in association with the identified item;

wherein said user interface means further is for generating retrieval input data identifying:

a group to which a retrieving user belongs,

a retrieving user's selection of a default or zero or more group event types from the predetermined plurality of group event types for the group,

a retrieving user's selection of a default or zero or more persons in the group,

a retrieving user's selection of a time period; and

said transmission means is adapted to transmit the retrieval input to the processing device to identify digital media items using the retrieval input;

the user terminal further including

receiving means for receiving any digital media items identified by the processing device; and

a display for displaying the received digital media items.

15. (Previously Amended) A method of operating a terminal for use in the archiving and retrieval of digital media items for predefined distinct groups of people, the method comprising:

receiving from an archiving user archiving input data identifying:

a group to which the user belongs,

a digital media item to be archived for the group,

a selection of zero or more group event types from a predetermined plurality of group event types specific to the group,

a selection of zero or more persons in the group, and

a selection of a time period;

transmitting the archiving input to a processing device for generating index information using the archiving input and for storing the index information in association with the identified item;

receiving from a retrieving user retrieval input data identifying:

a group to which the user belongs,

a selection of default or zero or more group event types from the predetermined plurality of group event types for the group,

a selection of default or zero or more persons in the group, and

a selection of a time period;

transmitting the retrieval input to the processing device to identify digital media items using the retrieval input;

receiving any digital media items identified by the processing device; and

displaying the received digital media items.

16. (Original) A carrier medium storing processor readable and implementable code for controlling a processor to carry out the method of any one of claims 1 to 13 or 15.

17. (Previously Amended) Apparatus for archiving and retrieving digital media items for predefined distinct groups of one or more people, the apparatus comprising:

receiving means for receiving archiving input data identifying a group to which the user belongs, the archiving input data identifying:

a digital media item to be archived for the group,

a selection of zero or more group event types from a predetermined plurality of group event types specific to the group,

a selection of zero or more persons in the group, and

a selection of a time period;

generating means for generating index information using the received user archiving input;

storing means for storing the index information in association with the identified digital media item;

wherein said receiving means is adapted to receive retrieval input data identifying a manual or automatic selection of zero or more group event types from the predetermined plurality of group event types for the group, a selection of zero or more persons in the group, and a selection of a time or time period; and

the apparatus further includes retrieval means for using the selections and the identified group to retrieve and output digital media items that match the selections.

18. (Previously Amended) Apparatus according to claim 17 wherein said receiving means is adapted to receive the retrieval input data from another user, said retrieval input data identifying a group to which the other user belongs.

19. (Original) Apparatus according to claim 17 including means for defining the distinct groups of people, and for defining group event types that are appropriate for members of the groups to distinguish episodic events memorable to the group.

20. (Original) Apparatus according to claim 17 wherein said receiving means is adapted to receive said digital media items to be archived, and item storing means for storing said digital media item in association with the index information.

21. (Previously Amended) Apparatus according to claim 17 wherein said receiving means is adapted to receive archiving input data identifying a digital media item as being associated with a memorable high point in the mind of the user.

22. (Previously Amended) Apparatus according to claim 21 wherein said receiving means is adapted to receive retrieval input data selecting memorable high points.

23. (Original) Apparatus according to claim 17 wherein said generating means is adapted to include an identification of a media type of the digital media item.

24. (Previously Amended) Apparatus according to claim 23 wherein said receiving means is adapted to receive retrieval input data identifying a media type, and said retrieval means is adapted to retrieve and output digital media items based on the identified media type.

25. (Previously Amended) Apparatus according to claim 17 wherein said receiving means is adapted to receive archiving input data identifying a plurality of digital media items to be sequenced as perceived by the user, and said generating means is adapted to generate the index information to include the identified sequences.

26. (Original) Apparatus according to claim 25 wherein said retrieval means is adapted to retrieve all digital media items identified to be sequenced when one or more digital media items are selected for retrieval.

27. (Original) Apparatus according to claim 17 wherein said receiving means receives a request for automatic nostalgic retrieval, said generating means is adapted to generate an initial set of selections and automatically modify one or more of the selections at a time in response to the request, said retrieval means is adapted to sequentially output digital media items retrieved using the generated and modified sets of selection.

28-57. (cancelled)

58. (Previously presented) A media archival method, comprising, under control of an operator who is a member of a group:

authenticating an operator as a member of a group of users,

identifying candidate identification values based upon the group with whom the operator is authenticated,

querying the operator for selection of identification data to be associated with a digital media item, the query identifying the candidate identification values and including valid selections of an event type and persons from the group and time,

generating index information from a response of the operator, and

storing the index information in association with the digital media item.

59. (Previously presented) The archival method of claim 58, wherein the candidate identification values for persons include names of group members.

60. (Previously presented) The archival method of claim 58, wherein the stored index information includes a flag that distinguishes high point items from other items, and the method further comprises setting the flag if the operator response includes an indication that the digital media item is a high point.

61. (Previously presented) The archival method of claim 58, wherein, if the operator response indicates that the digital media item is a member of a trail, the index information includes an identifier representing the media item's display position in a sequence of stored media items stored by the system.

62. (Previously presented) A multimedia retrieval method, comprising, under control of an operator who is a member of a group:

authenticating an operator as a member of a group of users,

identifying candidate identification values based upon the group with whom the operator is authenticated,

querying the operator for selection of identification data, the query identifying the candidate identification values and including valid selections of an event type and persons from the group and time,

generating index information from a response of the operator, and

retrieving stored media items corresponding to the index information.

63. (Previously presented) The retrieval method of claim 62, wherein the candidate identification values for persons include names of group members.

64. (Previously presented) The retrieval method of claim 62, wherein the stored index information includes a flag that distinguishes high point items from other items, and the method further comprises searching for the flag among the stored index information if the operator response includes an indication that high point items are selected.

65. (Previously presented) The retrieval method of claim 62, further comprising, if the operator response indicates that a trail is selected, presenting stored media items in a sequence as identified in the index information corresponding to the presented media items.

66. (Previously presented) A method of archiving digital media items, comprising:

receiving a user input identifying a social group to which an archiving user belongs;

building a database that includes:

digital media items to be archived for the social group, and

index information for the digital media items, each instance of index information created from archiving input data identifying a user's response to a query that identifies a plurality of event types previously registered as associated with the social group, and persons previously registered as members of the social group.

67. (Previously presented) A method of searching digital media items, comprising:

receiving a user input identifying a social group for which a search is to be conducted;

identifying candidate identification values based upon the social group,

displaying a query that identifies the candidate identification values and including valid selections of an event type for the social group, persons from the social group and time,

responsive to selection criteria made in response to the query, searching a database and retrieving digital media items that satisfy the selection criteria.